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Organización
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Организация
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
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联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Message from Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura,
Director-General of UNESCO,
on the occasion of the United States
International Education Week 2007**

12-16 November 2007

As the United States once again celebrates International Education Week, I am pleased to express support, personally and on behalf of UNESCO, to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as their departments jointly organize this important event in education and international understanding.

This year, the theme of International Education Week is International Education: fostering global citizenship and respect – a message of the utmost importance in today's world. It is also a reflection of UNESCO's mandate to promote peace and understanding through education and to ensure for everyone the right to take their place as a citizen in the global community. We are all aware how small our world is, and our lives are touched, almost on a daily basis, by the lives of those whose cultures and values are different from our own. It is through education that we come to understand and appreciate this diversity, and it is through learning from other cultures that we better understand what it means to be a global citizen.

As the theme rightly suggests, the principal value that underlies successful and effective international education is respect - respect for the other, for diversity and difference, for our planet and for future generations. An attitude of respect enables us to go beyond the mere observation of difference to build relationships across cultures, recognizing the fundamental dignity of every human being, whatever their background.

International – and indeed interpersonal – relations in our world today often fall prey to stereotyping, or putting people in boxes. This is the very antithesis of respect and belittles the rich humanity of others. International Education Week, which, like

UNESCO, puts emphasis on transcending barriers and appreciating difference, offers a welcome opportunity to build bridges and to make education a tool in creating new and deeper relationships across cultures. Learning other languages, making exchange visits, celebrating the various cultures of pupils and students – in these and other ways, education imbued with respect points the way for global citizens of the future.

I wish the International Education Week every success and expect that it will indeed promote attitudes of respect that last throughout life, opening up new and exciting horizons.

Koïchiro Matsuura